

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 9, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As Members of Congress who spend substantial periods of time with our families, staffs and colleagues in the District of Columbia, and as United States Representatives who must take into account the basic needs and interests of 705,000 federal tax-paying American citizens who live in the District yet have no representation in the U.S. Senate and whose own elected representative to the House is denied a vote, we write to express our outrage about the decision to shortchange the District of hundreds of millions of dollars in urgently needed relief under the \$2.2 trillion COVID-19 legislation that was recently signed into law.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) includes direct aid to states to help them respond to the many public health and economic challenges posed by the coronavirus outbreak. But the allocation formula for these direct grants inexplicably breaks from overwhelming precedent and treats the District of Columbia like a federal territory rather than a state, meaning that it will receive about \$500 million rather than the \$1.25 billion minimum allotted to the states. The District will lose out on \$750 million in essential funding during this crisis.

This decision is a scandalous departure from practice that dramatically increases health risks for everyone who lives and works in the District, a massive group that includes Members of Congress, our Capitol Hill staffs and our families.

The District of Columbia is home to 705,000 people, a population larger than that of two states, and its citizens pay more in federal tax dollars than people in 22 states. District residents pay the same federal taxes as state residents, which is why the District has been treated like a state under almost all federal grant programs—and not like U.S. territories, whose citizens do not pay individual federal income taxes (although they do pay other kinds of federal taxes).

There is no principled reason to abandon the customary practice of grouping the District with the states when it comes to the state aid grants in the CARES Act, and there are urgently compelling public health reasons to correct this affront to the local community. The District of Columbia is treating more than 1,400 COVID-19 cases and has already seen 28 deaths in the community. Its caseload is growing sharply along with those in neighboring Maryland and Virginia and the rest of the country.

The District is doing its part to fight the spread of the virus, but its economy has been hard hit by the necessary closures of many of the city's business, governmental and tourist sites. As the Nation's Capital, the city where we meet, where essential government functions are located, and where millions of our constituents travel every year, the District's ability to meet the full economic and health needs of its population will have direct consequences for the wellbeing of our own constituents, our communities and ourselves. We are one nation and there is no reason to cheat the people of the District, who actually pay more per capita in federal taxes than the people of any state.

We appreciate that Speaker Pelosi has already pledged to fight for retroactive full COVID-19 funding for the District. We hope this will become a unifying, bipartisan and bicameral point of agreement which demonstrates our commitment to the unity of the American people and that it can be enacted as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

Additional Cosigners:

Rep. Alma S. Adams

Rep. Nanette Diaz Barragán

Rep. Karen Bass

Rep. Donald S. Beyer, Jr.

Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.

Rep. Earl Blumenauer

Rep. Suzanne Bonamici

Rep. Anthony G. Brown

Rep. Julia Brownley

Rep. André Carson

Rep. Kathy Castor

Rep. Judy Chu

Rep. Yvette D. Clarke

Rep. Emanuel Cleaver  
Rep. Gerald E. Connolly  
Rep. Jim Costa  
Rep. Henry Cuellar  
Rep. Danny K. Davis  
Rep. Diana DeGette  
Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro  
Rep. Val Butler Demings  
Rep. Theodore E. Deutch  
Rep. Debbie Dingell  
Rep. Eliot L. Engel  
Rep. Anna G. Eshoo  
Rep. Adriano Espaillat  
Rep. Dwight Evans  
Rep. Marcia L. Fudge  
Rep. Jesús G. “Chuy” García  
Rep. Sylvia R. Garcia  
Rep. Jimmy Gomez  
Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva  
Rep. Debra A. Haaland  
Rep. Alcee L. Hastings  
Rep. Jahana Hayes  
Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee  
Rep. Pramila Jayapal  
Rep. Hakeem S. Jeffries  
Rep. Henry C. “Hank” Johnson, Jr.  
Rep. Marcy Kaptur  
Rep. Robin L. Kelly

Rep. Ro Khanna  
Rep. John B. Larson  
Rep. Brenda L. Lawrence  
Rep. Barbara Lee  
Rep. Ted Lieu  
Rep. Alan S. Lowenthal  
Rep. Stephen F. Lynch  
Rep. Carolyn B. Maloney  
Rep. Betty McCollum  
Rep. A. Donald McEachin  
Rep. James P. McGovern  
Rep. Gregory W. Meeks  
Rep. Grace Meng  
Rep. Gwen Moore  
Rep. Seth Moulton  
Rep. Jerrold Nadler  
Rep. Grace F. Napolitano  
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Rep. Adam Smith  
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Rep. Bennie G. Thompson  
Rep. Rashida Tlaib  
Rep. David J. Trone  
Rep. Lauren Underwood  
Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez  
Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Rep. Peter Welch  
Rep. Jennifer Wexton  
Rep. Susan Wild  
Rep. John A. Yarmuth